

It is stated the cell tower is needed to primarily serve the area, “extending along VT Route 7 roughly from Green Mountain Trailer Park, across the State/Commonwealth boundary and along Simonds Road”. This area is not only covered by Verizon but in my experience in using this road frequently and then checking specifically for addressing this issue I was able to use my personal cell service (AT&T), including voice and text, from the trailer park to Simonds Road. I was also able to use my AT&T service and Verizon work service at the Stewarts Convenience Store while responding to a hazardous material spill in December of 2021 as an employee of the State of Vermont. I was on site for 8 hours using both services without an issue. In addition, while also as an employee of the state, I responded to the PFOA contamination issue in March of 2016 and was stationed in the South Pownal area for several weeks. There were no communication issues at that point either. The map mentioned in, “VI. Section 248a(c)(3) Criteria” for cell coverage is NOT accurate.

In response to “not expected to have an undue adverse effect on the aesthetics and scenic beauty of the area”, the tower will be visible from several local residences in the area including my camp.

In addition, and contrary to the statement “The Project is not anticipated to be visible along any portion of a Vermont designated scenic highway”, the tower will be highly visible from Route 7 along the area of the former Green Mountain Race Track. Route 7 is designated by the “National Scenic Byway Foundation” as a scenic byway. Nor is there an understanding why it is stated the tower is necessary for cell service to be “critical to the enjoyment of the State’s designated byways” for such a short stretch of roadway. Although, this point is mute as there is presently working coverage in this area.

In response to the Department of Public Safety’s wish to implement the First Responder Network Authority (“FirstNet”) and an ongoing coverage plan for safety purposes I spoke with a past and present long-time First Responder and prominent member of the South Pownal Rescue Squad and South Pownal Fire Department. He stated there has been no communication issues while responding and addressing emergencies. He stated they have a very reliable Radio Network and have not had issues if and when cell phones are used in the response or acting on such emergencies.

Vince Chiorgno

Bennington, VT

